



First House: Two Centuries of Holiday Cheer

Over the years, Virginia's Executive Mansion has been the home to 54 first families and so far, 198 Christmases! As we rest up on the eve of the bicentennial, Governor and Mrs. McDonnell wanted to showcase the almost 200 years in the Mansion and the families that have made the stories within the walls!

Background:

Designed by Alexander Parris and completed in 1813, James Barbour was the first governor to live in the mansion. During this time, the President was James Madison, the fourth President of the United States, whose portrait hangs in the South Ballroom. The third President, Thomas Jefferson, designed the neighboring Virginia Capitol and in his plans suggested building the Governor's home close to the Capitol. Jefferson never did visit the Mansion. By the time the Mansion was built, he was too old to travel from Charlottesville to Richmond. References indicate that at Monticello, as well as throughout Virginia, served mince pie — filled with apples, raisins, beef suet, and spices — a traditional holiday dinner favorite. Jefferson wrote to Mary Walker Lewis on December 25, 1813: "I will take the liberty of sending for some barrels of apples, and if a basket of them can now be sent by the bearer they will be acceptable as accommodated to the season of mince pies." Music also filled the scene. The Monticello music library included the Christmas favorite "Adeste Fideles." This was likely the same way Christmas was celebrated in the Mansion. In 1870, President Ulysses S. Grant formally declared Christmas a United States Federal holiday and signed it into law.

**** A huge thank you to Karla Boughey for coordinating and researching the 2012 décor!**

Décor and symbolism throughout the Mansion:

Ladies Parlor (first room on the right)

Governor Harry F. Byrd and family room -1926-1930

Governor Harry F. Byrd was a very influential Governor with many strong ties in Virginia. The Ladies Parlor is decorated to represent the 1920's Byrd era and his four children.

Harry Flood Byrd, Sr. (June 10, 1887 – October 20, 1966) of Berryville in Clarke County, Virginia, was an American newspaper publisher, farmer and politician. He was a descendant of one of the First Families of Virginia, colonial Governor, Robert "King" Carter of Corotoman. His ancestors also included William Byrd II of Westover Plantation, who established Richmond and Pocahontas. One of his children, Harry F. Byrd, Jr. succeeded him as U.S. Senator and still resides in Northern Virginia. He was the brother of famed aviator Richard Evelyn Byrd. Byrd Airport was dedicated as Richard Evelyn Byrd Flying Field in 1927 in honor of aviator Richard E. Byrd.

On display:

Tinkertoy Construction Set:

A toy set for children, created in 1914, one year after the A. C. Gilbert Company's Erector Set. Designed by Charles H. Pajeau and Robert Pettit in Evanston, Illinois, after seeing children play with pencils and empty spools of thread. Pajeau and Pettit set out to market a toy that would allow and inspire children to use their imaginations. At first, this did not go well, but after a year or two over a million were sold.

Lionel train:

When Lionel train founder Joshua Lionel Cowen's immigrant family arrived in New York after the Civil War, the railroads were literally America's engines of progress. The "Golden Spike" meeting of the Union Pacific and Central Pacific lines in 1869 unified the continent and signaled the birth of a world power. Cowen was born in 1877, just before Edison's first electric light. He grew up with real trains, amid dizzying change. Around the time he founded Lionel in 1900, passenger lines like the peerless Twentieth Century Limited symbolized American technology and sophistication.

Cowen was already a successful inventor when he created his first toy train, but the Electric Express and its offspring soon became a sacred mission, and Cowen would spend a lifetime stoking America's imagination with the romance of the rails. He told boys that Lionels would prepare them for adulthood. Soon dads too were encouraged to join Youngsters in model train enthusiasm, to future father-son bonding. With growing prosperity, Lionel's layouts cropped up in more living rooms, especially at Christmas. Before mid-century, railroads were our economic lifeblood, as well as cultural icons -- but it was not to last.

Christmas village:

The earliest "Christmas Villages" were probably Nativity displays in homes and churches. Christians have been making and displaying statues that represent the birth of Jesus and the Magi's visit since the thirteenth century, if not earlier.

In many homes of the 1920s and 1930s, it would have been impossible to tell whether the family Christmas display started with a railroad, a nativity, or a putz village - the three were so intertwined. In the eastern United States, these seasonal displays were often called "train gardens" or "Christmas gardens." Although most of the putz houses and "glitterhouses" that have survived to this day were made in Japan, many were made in Germany and a few were made in this country as well.

Christmas toys the Byrd children may have received:

Mysto Erector Structural Steel Builder, 1913

The Erector set quickly became one of the most popular toys of all time. Those kids who already owned a set would beg Santa annually for an upgrade, aiming for the elusive "No. 12 1/2" deluxe kit that came with blueprints for the "Mysterious Walking Giant" robot.

Bubble gum, 1928

Walter E. Diemer invented a superior formulation for bubble gum, which he called "Double Bubble."

Yo-Yo, 1929

The yo-yo was introduced as a new American fad by Donald Duncan.

Mickey Mouse, 1928 -1930

Mickey Mouse made his film debut in Steamboat Willie, the world's first synchronized-sound cartoon. Created by emerging filmmaker Walt Disney, Mickey would soon become the iconic face of childhood.

In 1930, Charlotte Clark was commissioned to create the first stuffed Mickey Mouse doll, and much to Disney's delight, it became an instant must-have for children across the U.S. It was just the beginning for Mickey, who would go on to star in countless animated features and movies as well as Disney's international line of theme parks and video games and toys.

Old Governor's Office (first room on the left)

The original Governor's office until it moved to the Capitol in the early 1900's, is a tribute to the military and the Governor's who were either war time Governor's or served in the military. 11 former Virginia Governor's did not serve in the military but served during war times. Those include the following:

Thomas Jefferson	June 2, 1779-June 3, 1781	Revolutionary War
Benjamin Harrison	December 1, 1781-November 30, 1784	Revolutionary War
James Barbour	January 4, 1812-December 11, 1814	War of 1812
James Hubert Price	January 19, 1938-January 20, 1942	World War II
John Stewart Battle	January 18, 1950-January 19, 1954	Cold War
Thomas Bahnson Stanley	January 20, 1954-January 11, 1958	Cold War
James Lindsay Almond, Jr.	January 11, 1958-January 13, 1962	Cold War
Albertis Sydney Harrison, Jr.	January 13, 1962-January 15, 1966	Cold War
Mills Edwin Godwin, Jr.	January 15, 1966-January 17, 1970	Cold War
John Nichols Dalton	January 14, 1978-January 16, 1982	Cold War
Gerald Lee Baliles	January 11, 1986-January 13, 1990	Cold War

32 of Virginia's former Governor's (this includes Governor's who were under provisional Government, those who were acting Governors for short periods of time, or who were CSA Governor's) served in the military. Those included the following:

Governor	Term Served	Branch of Military	Years Served
Patrick Henry	July 6, 1776-June 1, 1779	1st Virginia Regiment	1970s
William Fleming	June 4-12, 1781	George Washington's Virginia Regiment, Botetourt County Militia	French and Indian War, Dunmore's War
Thomas Nelson	June 12-November 22, 1781	Lower Virginia Militia	
David Jameson	November 22-30, 1781	Provincial Forces of Pennsylvania, Militia of Pennsylvania	Revolutionary War
Edmund Randolph	November 30, 1786-November 12, 1788	Continental Army	1775
Beverley Randolph	November 12, 1788-December 1, 1791	Militia	Revolutionary War
Henry Lee	December 1, 1791-December 1, 1794	Continental Army	Revolutionary War
Robert Brooke	December 1, 1794-November 30, 1796	Company of Cavalry	
James Wood	November 30, 1796-December 6, 1799	12th Virginia Regiment	1774-1783
Hardin Burnley	December 7-9, 1799	Revolutionary Army	1777-1781
James Monroe	December 19, 1799-December 24, 1802	Williamsburg Militia, Continental Army	1775-1779
John Page	December 24, 1802-December 11, 1805	Virginia State Militia	
James Monroe	January 19-April 3, 1811	Williamsburg Militia, Continental Army	1775-1779
Wilson Cary Nicholas	December 11, 1814-December 11, 1816	Virginia volunteer units	1780-1783
James Patton Preston	December 11, 1816-December 11, 1819	12th US Infantry, 23rd Regiment Infantry	Around 1812
John Floyd	March 4, 1830-March 31, 1834	Virginia State Militia	1807-1812
William Smith	January 1, 1846-January 1, 1849	49th Virginia Infantry, Confederate Congress	1861-1863
John Buchanan Floyd	January 1, 1849-January 1, 1852	Secretary of War	1857-1861
Henry Alexander Wise	January 1, 1856-January 1, 1860	Confederate Army	1861-1865
William Smith	January 1, 1864-May 9, 1865	49th Virginia Infantry, Confederate Congress	1861-1865

Henry Horatio Wells	April 4, 1868-September 21, 1869	26th Michigan Infantry	1862-1865
James Lawson Kemper	January 1, 1874-January 1, 1878	1st Virginia Infantry, Virginia Militia	1847-1858
Frederick William Mackey Holliday	January 1, 1878-January 1, 1882	Army of Northern Virginia, 33rd Virginia Regiment	1861-1865
William Evelyn Cameron	January 1, 1882-January 1, 1886	Confederate Army	1861-1865
Fitzhugh Lee	January 1, 1886-January 1, 1890	2nd Cavalry Regiment, Confederate States Army	1856-1865
Phillip Watkins McKinney	January 1, 1890-January 1, 1894	4th Virginia Cavalry	
Charles Triplett O'Ferrall	January 1, 1894-January 1, 1898	Confederate Army	1861-1865
William Hodges Mann	February 1, 1910-February 1, 1914	12th Virginia Infantry	Civil War
Colgate Whitehead Darden Jr.	January 21, 1942-January 15, 1946	United States Marine Corps Air Force	World War I
Charles S. Robb	January 16, 1982 – January 11, 1986	Marines	Vietnam
Lawrence Douglas Wilder	January 13, 1990-January 15, 1994	Army	Korean War
James Stuart Gilmore III	January 17, 1998-January 12, 2002	Army	Early 1970s
Robert Francis McDonnell	January 16, 2010-current	Army	1976-1981

The remaining 31 Governor's did not serve in the military or during War Times that directly affected the administration.

McDonnell Display Table:

Photo of the First Lady's father, Frank Gardner. Written on the back of photo by Mr. Gardner: "DESERTER?....."

Dog 'Keynote', formerly of the forces of Imperial Japan, was found by Marine Sergeant Frank Gardner, of Falls Church, Virginia who shared his rations with the small puppy during the Saipan battle. Now 'Keynote,' his American name, is an ardent enthusiast of the American Marine way of life."

Marines Red **Ball hat** belonged to Mr. Gardner

Flag – the Flag that layed on Mr. Gardner's casket at his funeral. The bullet shell casings in the bottom of the flag box are the shells from the bullets shot from riffles during the 16 gun salute.

Airforce Officers Cap – Governor's father's – Lt. Col. John F. McDonnell, OSI, Dist 4, IG, USAF

Items in the Old Governor's office are on loan from the Virginia War Memorial:

US Army Desert Boots

Nick McGraw

Operation Iraqi Freedom

US Army

Aylett VA,

Nick McGraw was assigned to Eagle Troop 2/2 ACR "Armored Cavalry Regiment Light" of the US Army. These boots were worn in Iraq April of 2003 to April 2004 during Operation Iraqi Freedom. In true Cavalry tradition, the brass spurs were made from melted down Iraqi brass shell casings shortly after the invasion of Iraq.

U.S. M-1 Chaplain's Helmet

William Robert Floyd

Korean and Vietnam Wars

U.S. Marine Corps/U.S. Army

Chester Virginia

This M-1 helmet was worn by a former World War II U.S. Marine during the Korean and Vietnam Wars. Discharged at the end of World War II, William R. Floyd later joined the U.S. Army and served in Korea with the Chaplain Corps. Discharged again, he rejoined the Army once more for the Vietnam War. The cross was applied to his helmet in Korea, and he took the same helmet with him when he went to Vietnam where he cut the front of his helmet cover to reveal the cross beneath. Chaplain Floyd served our nation in three wars, and still does Veteran Ministry to incarcerated veterans today.

Vietnam 40mm Trench Art Vase

T.E. Williamson

Vietnam War

U.S. Navy

Williamsburg VA

Made from a US Navy 40mm brass shell casing in Vietnam, T.E "Buzz" Williamson traded some cigarettes to a South Vietnamese sailor for it. Buzz was in the US Navy during the Vietnam War and currently lives in Williamsburg Virginia.

POW bracelet

Vietnam

Donated to the Virginia War Memorial by an anonymous Virginian

During the height of the Vietnam War in 1970, three college students wanted to draw public attention to prisoners of war and others who were missing in Vietnam. Noting the popularity of soldier's souvenir metal bracelets obtained in Vietnam, the students thought such bracelets might be a positive way to remember POWs and MIAs. Starting out with an initial order of 1,200

bracelets with the serviceman's name, rank and date of capture/date missing, the bracelets became hugely popular and remain so today. The program was announced on Veterans Day 1970 and soon afterward as many as 12,000 were selling per day!

WWII Merchant Marine Chelsea Ship's Bell Clock

John Musch

WWII

U.S. Merchant Marines

Goochland Virginia

WWII Chelsea Ship's Bell Clock acquired from a US Merchant Vessel shortly after WWII. John was a Merchant Marine during WWII and made many voyages in both the Atlantic and the Pacific through submarine infested waters. During World War II, the U.S. Merchant Marines lost more personnel per capita than any of the armed services.

U.S. Marine Corps Dress Cover

Dr. E. Bruce Heilman

World War II,

USMC

Richmond Virginia

This U.S. Marine Corps Dress Cover was worn by Dr. E. Bruce Heilman in World War II. Dr. Heilman joined the Marines in 1944 as an 18 year old, and fought in the battle for Okinawa. Heilman credits his military experience with transforming his life, "the corps taught me what 'now' means," he said. After WWII he attended college thanks to the GI Bill, eventually earning a PHD. Later he served for 16 years as the President of the University of Richmond and currently serves as the University's Chancellor.

Combat Infantry Badge and Bronze Star

James A. Jamison

Korean War

U.S. Army

Richmond Virginia

This Combat Infantry Badge (CIB) was awarded to U.S. Army Soldiers being personally present, and under hostile fire, while serving in assigned, primary infantry or Special Forces duty in a unit actively engaging the enemy in ground combat. This CIB was awarded to James Jamison during the Korean War for his actions on Heart Break Ridge with I Company 223rd Infantry Regiment 40th Infantry Division.

The Bronze Star Medal is an individual military award of the United States Armed Forces. It may be awarded for acts of heroism, acts of merit, or meritorious service in a combat zone. When awarded for acts of heroism, the medal is awarded with the "V" device. James Jamison was awarded the Bronze Star while serving with the 40th Division, a tank on which Jamison was riding was hit and caught fire. Another soldier riding on the tank with Jamison was thrown into a trench and was pinned under the tank. At the risk of his own life, PFC Jamison jumped off the tank and pulled the soldier to safety while the tank continued burning.

WWI Tobacco Safe Made out of a USN WWI Shell Casing

Courtesy of the Hall Family, Tidewater, Virginia

This tobacco safe was presented to Walter H. Hall Jr. while serving in the U.S. Navy during World War One. The Inscription reads:
Fired at a German Submarine during the Gibraltar Barrage in the Straits of Gibraltar Nov 10th 1918 by U.S. Submarine Chaser #190 under the command of Ensign Walter H. Hall Jr.

U.S. Army Female Field Grade/General Officer's Service Cap

MARY NICELY BLISS

Cold War /War on Terror

US Army

Richmond, Virginia

Colonel Mary Nicely Bliss of Richmond Virginia received her commission in July of 1977. Throughout her career she served with the 415th Chemical Group, the 78th and 80th Divisions and the Crisis Action Team of the U. S. Joint Forces Command. She served 30 years with the US Army on both active and reserve duty and rose to the rank of Colonel in January of 2002. Mary stated that it was a great honor and privilege to serve and to give back to her country, because it has given me so much. She was glad she was able to give her time and energy to help to train and mentor many soldiers.

Carl Sitter Medal of Honor and Citation

Carl L. Sitter

USMC WWII, Korean War

Richmond, Virginia

Carl L. Sitter joined United States Marine Corps on June 22, 1940. He served for eight months in Iceland, and then was ordered to the Pacific area. He was serving as a corporal in the Wallis Islands when, on December 12, 1942, he was given a field commission as a Second Lieutenant in the Marine Corps Reserve. He later received a regular commission.

Sitter saw combat on Eniwetok in the Marshall Islands, and Guam in the Marianas. He was first wounded on February 20, 1944 on Eniwetok, but went back into action almost immediately.

He was wounded again the following July on Guam, during the action in which he earned the Silver Star. Sitter exposed himself to enemy fire to lead his rifle platoon, and when wounded refused to be evacuated until his mission was accomplished.

Captain Sitter was awarded the Medal of Honor for leadership during a two-day battle at Hagaruri, Korea. In the bitter fighting between the Chinese Communists and the surrounded U.N. forces near the Chosin Reservoir in November 1950, Captain Sitter was wounded by hand grenades, but continued to lead his men until he repulsed a counterattack. He retired from active duty on June 30, 1970, after reaching the rank of Colonel in the Marine Corps.

After 30 years in the Marine Corps, Sitter went to work for the Virginia Department of Social Services. He retired in 1985 at age 63. In 1998, at age 75, Sitter returned to college, graduating on May 28, 1999 at age 77. Sitter died in Richmond, Virginia, and is buried in Arlington National Cemetery, Arlington, Virginia.

U.S. Army Kevlar Helmet

General John P. McLaren, Jr.

Iraqi Freedom

Virginia Beach, Virginia

John P. McLaren, Jr. served in the United States Army from 1974 to 2011. He retired at the rank of Major General in the United States Army on August 29, 2011. Major General McLaren served as the Commanding General of the 80th Training Command (TASS) from May 17, 2008 to August 29, 2011. Prior to this assignment he worked as the Vice Commander of the Joint War Fighting Center and Deputy Joint Force Trainer at U.S. Joint Forces Command in Suffolk, Virginia. McLaren also served as the commander of the Iraq Assistance Group within Multinational Corps Iraq. As the commander of the group, he directed the military transition teams assigned to Iraqi army units at the battalion, brigade and division level partnering with them in fighting the Counter Insurgency Battle in Iraq. During this mission, then Brigadier General McLaren, was the senior representative of the largest mobilization call up of 80th Division Soldiers since World War II. General McLaren wore this helmet during his deployment to Iraq with the 80th Division.

Red Cross “Grey Ladies” Cap

Mrs. Virginia Davis

1950’s

American Red Cross

Of Richmond Virginia

Virginia Davis joined the American Red Cross in the 1950’s and worked at Walter Reed Army Medical Center in Washington, DC. She remembers working with World War II veterans and other military personnel.

US Navy Service Cap

Rear Admiral John L. Marocchi

World War II

Midlothian, Virginia

John Marocchi was a member of the US Naval Academy’s Class of 1942. After Pearl Harbor, graduation was moved up to January and he was assigned to the Cleveland Class Light Cruiser, USS Birmingham. Gravely injured during operations in the Pacific, he was hospitalized for sixteen months. After the war, he was assigned to increasingly responsible duty stations within the Naval Intelligence field. His final duty station was as one of two deputy directors of the National Security Agency. The Navy Service Cap shown here was worn by Marocchi after his promotion to Rear Admiral.

USCG Cutter Harriet Lane -- Plank Owner Ball Cap

Tom Rummel

Cold War, War on Drugs

Mechanicsville Virginia

This Ball Cap was worn by Tom Rummel while serving as the Executive Officer (XO) of the USCGC *Harriet Lane* (WMEC-903). A plank owner is an individual who was a member of the crew of a ship when that ship was placed in commission. Sailors who are plank owners at their current command often have the word "PLANK OWNER" embroidered on the back of their uniform ball cap to denote this designation.

U.S. M1 Garand Semiautomatic Rifle

WWII, Korea, Vietnam

Springfield Armory, Massachusetts

Virginia War Memorial Collection

The premier battle rifle of the United States in World War II, the M1 Garand is an eight-shot, semiautomatic, gas-operated weapon chambered for the .30-06 cartridge. John M. Garand of Springfield Armory developed it between 1920 and 1936; production began in 1937. Reluctantly accepted at first, the M1 soon proved itself. Fittingly, Gen. George S. Patton called it the "greatest battle implement ever devised." More than 5.5 million were produced, and it saw continued use in Korea and Vietnam.

Christmas Menus

Donated to the Virginia War Memorial by Harper S. Darden.

Christmas Yank Magazines

World War Two

Donated to the Virginia War Memorial by an anonymous Virginian

Yank, was a weekly magazine published by the United States military during World War II. The first issue was published on June 17, 1942 and the last issue on December 1945. The magazine was written by enlisted soldiers and was made available to the members of the U.S. military serving overseas. It was published at facilities around the world and Yank was the most widely read magazine in the history of the U.S. military, achieving a worldwide circulation of more than 2.6 million readers.

Purple Heart Medal

Thomas C. Hale

World War II

U.S. Army

Dinwiddie County Virginia

The Purple Heart is a United States military decoration awarded in the name of the President to those who have been wounded or killed while serving on or after April 5, 1917 with the U.S. military. Thomas C. Hale was wounded during the Battle of the Bulge and was captured by the Germans becoming a POW for the duration of the war.

Prisoner of War Medal

Thomas C. Hale

World War II

U.S. Army

Dinwiddie County Virginia

The Prisoner of War Medal is awarded to any person who was a prisoner of war after April 5, 1917. It is awarded to any person who was taken prisoner or held captive while engaged in an action against an enemy of the United States; while engaged in military operations involving conflict with an opposing Armed Force; or while serving with friendly forces engaged in armed conflict against an opposing Armed Force in which the United States is not a belligerent party. Thomas C. Hale was wounded during the Battle of the Bulge and was captured by the Germans becoming a POW for the duration of the war.

World War II Victory Medal

William H. Hicks, JR
U.S. Merchant Marines
Richmond Virginia

The World War II Victory Medal is a campaign medal of the United States military which was created by an act of Congress in July 1945. The medal commemorates military service during World War II and is awarded to any member of the United States military, including members of the armed forces of the Government of the Philippine Islands and U.S. Merchant Marines, who served on active duty, or as a reservist, between December 7, 1941 and December 31, 1946.

Governor Allen with four Medal of Honor Recipients Photo

Dedication of the Virginia section of the Medal of Honor Grove in Pennsylvania,
The Grove contains 52 acres of natural woodland and is designed as a living memorial to the 3,459 recipients of our nation's highest military decoration, the Medal of Honor. A section of the Grove is designated for each of the 50 states plus Puerto Rico and the District of Columbia. In this photo - left to right:
Ronald Eugene Rosser (U.S. Army), Wesley Lee Fox (USMC), Virginia Governor George Allen, Jacklyn Harold Lucas (U.S. Army) Carl Leonard Sitter (USMC)

Display Case (entrance hallway on the right)

Gate Closer, James Monroe, 1799 – 1802

This beautifully crafted hand forged steel gate closer is from Monroe's house, Oak Hill, in Loudoun County. It is "a most unusual object and a fitting ornament to Monroe's home that was designed for him by Thomas Jefferson." The eagle was a favorite symbol of the 1800s – they were "mounted on mirrors, inlaid in fine furniture, decorated china and were engraved on silver of the era.

Paint Box, John Floyd, 1830 – 1834

This paint box was used by Governor John Floyd over his lifetime.
Look closely and you can still see the paint colors that he used.

Scissors, Governor John S. Battle, 1950 – 1954

These scissors were used by Governor Battle to cut the dedication ribbon for the George P. Coleman Memorial Bridge on May 7th, 1952.

Book, Patrick Henry, 1776 – 1779

This book, "The First Part of the Institutes of the Laws of England," is believed to have belonged to Governor Patrick Henry. The book itself is what he would have used and studied in law school.

China Plate, James Monroe, 1799 – 1802

This plate is part of the china collection of Governor Monroe.

South Ballroom (ballroom on the right, with the piano)

Governor Thomas B. Stanley and family room (1954-1958)

Governor Stanley and his wife, Anne Pocahontas Basset Stanley, focused on furniture during their four years in the Mansion. Governor Stanley first made a fortune working for his wife's father, a found of Bassett Furniture, then by starting his own company in Stanleytown, outside of Martinsville.

Anne Stanley pursued her own interest in gardening and hired Charles Gillette to renovate the outside garden. Having grown up in the furniture business, she took special delight in redecorating the mansion, using much of her own money and many pieces of Stanley and Bassett furniture, as well as some antiques. The first "automatic fire detector" was installed to protect the house and its furnishings.

As seen on the picture displayed on the easel in the south ballroom, one of the Stanley's Christmases was a pink one!

Décor

Milk glass on mantel:

1950 Brides would have received milk glass as gifts.

Westmoreland Ivy ball glass (late 1950s)

Aluminum candy dish:

Most hammered aluminum pieces made their way into homes from the 1930s through the 1950s as wedding gifts. Colorful anodized aluminum wares were popular with homemakers through the 50s and early 60s

Toy's on Display:

Santa:

Classic 1950's stuffed Santa doll with vinyl face.

Baby Dolls:

Both are typical of the large drink & wet baby dolls that were ever so popular in the 1950s. Some of the known ones are American Character Tiny Tears and Baby Toodles, Ideal's Betsy Wetsy, and Alexander's Kathy. Most were made of hard vinyl, molded painted hair, sleep eyes and nurser mouths with an exit hole in the bottom.

Fashion Doll:

The Supermarket Dolls from the 1950s were made by companies such as Deluxe Reading or Arrow specifically for the supermarket and drug store trade. The dolls called out to little girls and their mothers--for a reasonable price (sold for about \$9.00), they could take home a tall (usually between "24 and "30) elegantly dressed doll. The dolls were generally made of soft, bendable stuffed vinyl (one piece, nicely molded bodies) and vinyl heads with sleep-eyes and rooted hair. The dolls generally had high-heeled feet and ladies bodies, and were dressed elaborately in evening or bridal wear. The dolls variously went by delightful names such as "Darling Debbie," "Loveable Louise," "Sweet Rosemary," "Betty the Beautiful Bride" or "Bonnie the Beautiful Bride."

Lamb Chop:

Lamb Chop is a sock puppet sheep created by late comedian and ventriloquist Shari Lewis. In 1957, Lamb Chop, an ewe, first appeared with Lewis on Hi Mom, a local morning show that aired on WNBC in New York.

Radio flyer fire truck:

A 16-year-old Italian boy named Antonio Pasin was one of the millions who immigrated to America from Europe at the start of the 20th century. A skilled carpenter, Pasin headed to Chicago and began building little red wagons out of stamped metal. By 1923, he had saved enough money to create the Liberty Coaster Company, and he began mass-producing the wagon for just under \$3. He named it the Radio Flyer in homage to two of his favorite inventions of the time: the radio and the airplane

1956 Tonka toy:

1956 toy season begins with a new name. Name changes from Mound Metalcraft Inc. to Tonka toys, Inc. (the truck we have displayed is not from that year, but is a true Tonka truck).

Dollhouse:

The decade of the 1940s was a watershed one for dollhouses and furnishings because of the introduction of new materials such as plastic, which was so amenable to mass production. The full benefit of these was inherited during the decade of the 1950s, coinciding with an economic boom in North America. The era of steel houses and plastic furniture was here to stay. The house on display sold for about \$3.79 in 1957.

Record player:

The roots of the kiddie record player lie in Thomas Edison's invention of the phonograph (1877). Edison's machine was first to reproduce recorded sound, which it recorded on a rotating sheet of tinfoil. It was soon improved upon by other inventors and became popular with the general public when Emil Berliner invented flat circular discs to be used on the phonograph. These new, easier-to-handle marvels were called "records." The record player revolution hit children in the 1950's when records and record players shrank to a compact, kid-friendly size. One of the big innovations to hit the recorded music world was the 45-rpm single, which allowed the reproduction of two songs, one per side, on a miniature seven-inch record. They were perfect for rock and roll songs and retellings of fairy tales, both of which had immense appeal for kids. Toy and department stores took note of this and began to sell portable record players to children.

Toys invented during that time:

Play-Doh, 1956

Yahtzee, 1956

Hula Hoop, 1958

North Ballroom (Ballroom on the left)

The North ballroom represents all of the white Christmases that the Mansion has seen. A white Christmas is defined if snow actually fell on Christmas day. Thank you to Carrie Rose, meteorologist from CBS 6 for helping compile this data.

Year	Amount	Governor
2010	2.7"	McDonnell
1993	0.1"	Wilder
1985	Dusting	Robb
1981	1.1"	Dalton
1970	0.2"	Holton
1969	1.8"	Godwin
1962	4.3"	Harrison
1959	Dusting	Almond
1948	0.6"	Tuck
1947	0.3"	Tuck
1935	Dusting	Peery
1917	Dusting	Stuart
1914	5.1"	Stuart
1909	1.8"	Swanson
1906	Dusting	Swanson
1902	1.1"	Montague

*1966: None fell on Christmas Day, but 4" measured on the ground from Dec 23-24 storm

*1908: none fell, but 5" on ground from Dec 22-23 storm that produced 17.2"

All photos in North Ballroom are of the Governors and/or their families that were in office when it snowed on Dec. 25.

Register of Meteorological observations

Copy of the original hand written copy of the weather for the month of December 1860. Carrie Rose obtained this document from U.S. Department of Commerce's National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration.

Table in Between Ballrooms

McDonnell table – 2010 – Present

The McDonnell family is very proud of their Irish heritage and is strong in their Catholic faith, and therefore, the table presents an Irish Catholic theme.

Greenery in the display includes purple shamrocks, ivy, and blue thistle; all native Irish plants.

Displayed around the table are the symbols of the 12 days of Christmas, an Irish Catholic originating tradition that has been popular in the United States for many years. Most sing along with the song when it is played, but it had a quite serious purpose when it was written.

During the centuries when it was a crime to be Catholic and to practice one's faith, 1558 to 1829, in public or private, in Ireland and England "The Twelve Days of Christmas" was written as a "catechism song" to help young Catholics learn the beliefs of their faith. It was a memory aid—when being caught with anything in writing indicating adherence to the Catholic faith could not only get you imprisoned, it could get you hanged.

The song's gifts are hidden meanings to the teachings of the faith. The "true love" mentioned in the song doesn't refer to an earthly suitor, it refers to God himself. The "me" who receives the presents refers to every baptized person. The partridge in a pear tree is Jesus Christ, the Son of God. In the song, Christ is symbolically presented as a mother partridge which feigns injury to decoy predators from her helpless nestlings, much in memory of the expression of Christ's sadness over the fate of Jerusalem: "Jerusalem! Jerusalem! How often would I have sheltered thee under my wings, as a hen does her chicks, but thou wouldst not have it so..."

The other symbols mean the following:

- 2 Turtle Doves = The Old and New Testaments
- 3 French Hens = Faith, Hope and Charity, the Theological Virtues
- 4 Calling Birds = the Four Gospels and/or the Four Evangelists
- 5 Golden Rings = The first Five Books of the Old Testament, the "Pentateuch", which gives the history of man's fall from grace.
- 6 Geese A-laying = the six days of creation
- 7 Swans A-swimming = the seven gifts of the Holy Spirit, the seven sacraments
- 8 Maids A-milking = the eight beatitudes
- 9 Ladies Dancing = the nine Fruits of the Holy Spirit
- 10 Lords A-leaping = the ten commandments
- 11 Pipers Piping = the eleven faithful apostles
- 12 Drummers Drumming = the twelve points of doctrine in the Apostle's Creed

Dining Room

Governor Claude A. Swanson, 1906-1910

The early twentieth century was a time of expansion. Virginia's population had more than doubled since Jefferson's Capitol had been constructed, from three quarters of a million people to almost two million, and its government had grown accordingly. Just as the Roosevelt's had added an office wing to the White House and the Virginia legislature had added two wings to the Capitol, Governor Claude Augustus Swanson applied to the legislature for money for an addition to the Mansion. Thinking ahead to 1907 when the Commonwealth would celebrate the 300th anniversary of the founding of Jamestown, the legislature approved funds for a formal dining room. Architect Duncan Lee was hired, and First Lady Elizabeth Swanson took an active role in the mansion's renovation, as well as that of the Capitol next door. During this time, the wall between the ballrooms was also taken down, fireplaces added, parquet floors installed (the same floors remain today), and columns added.

The First Broadcast took place on Christmas Eve of 1906. On this day, Reginald Fessenden used an Alexanderson alternator and rotary spark-gap transmitter to make the first radio audio broadcast, from Brant Rock, Massachusetts. Ships at sea heard a broadcast that included Fessenden playing *O Holy Night* on the violin and reading a passage from the Bible. Reports were received from ships along the Atlantic northeast coast and from shore stations as far south as Norfolk, Virginia. A repeat broadcast on New Year's Eve was heard as far south as the West Indies.

Nutcracker

Many recordings have been made since the 1909 of the Nutcracker Suite made its debut as the first record album. But it was not until the LP album was developed that recordings of the complete ballet began to be made. Because of the ballets approximate hour and a half length when performed without intermission, applause, or interpolated numbers, it fitted very comfortably onto two LPs. German record company Odeon pioneered the "album" in 1909 when it released the "Nutcracker Suite" by Tchaikovsky on four double-sided discs in a specially-designed package.

Wealthier higher class families were the ones who could afford albums and the players to play them. As such, during Swanson Christmases, most likely they would entertain with the Nutcracker playing in the background. They also likely decorated with nutcrackers during that time period as well.

Much like the Nutcracker, many of the American traditions came from Europe, in particular Germany. The Steinway & Sons piano manufacturing firm was founded by German immigrant Henry E. Steinway in 1853. The Mansion's south ballroom has an original Steinway, purchased by Governor Byrd in the late 1920s. The Studebakers built large numbers of wagons used during the Western migration; Studebaker, like the Duesenberg brothers, later became an important early automobile manufacturer. Carl Schurz, a refugee from the unsuccessful first German democratic revolution of 1848 became an influential politician first in the Republican then in the Democratic party, and served as U.S. Secretary of the Interior. Even the game of cornhole originated in Germany. Many believe it dates back to the 14th Century.

Many Christmas traditions, ornaments, and décor came from Germany. The nutcracker originated in Germany and still remains a very prominent activity in America during December. German settlers brought the Christmas tree custom to the United States. The 'pickle' ornament is also a German tradition that many American families participate in. The child who is first to find the pickle ornament on the tree gets an extra present.

Pine Cones

Pine cones were very popular in the early 1900s. Some were painted green and used to represent trees around the nativity or electric train. Others were left natural or painted other colors and used as ornaments and in décor. In fact, between 1905 and 1915, pine cones were so popular that pine-cone-shaped ornaments were among the most popular "store-bought" ornaments in families who could afford them.

Hershey's Kisses - 1907

Kisses milk chocolates were introduced. The candy got its name by the machine that makes them, which made kiss sounds and appears to "kiss" the conveyor belt onto which the chocolate is dispensed.

Model T - 1908

Henry Ford makes his first Model T for \$850